VISIT…

MARVEL
RAZORLINE
7
mar
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SUPER HEROES FROM CLIVE BARKER
Ectokid
I'VE GOT YOUR MOTHER-- AND THE ONLY WAY YOU'LL SAVE HER...
IS OVER YOUR
DEAD BODY!
OBI
DIRECT EDITION
SKROCE + DVORAK '93

CREATED BY CLIVE BARKER
WELL, NOW--LOOK WHO'S BACK! HELLO, FREAK! IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME-- TOO LONG!
I DID WHAT YOU SAID-- I WENT TO THE ECTOSPHERE TO FIND MY FATHER--
ICE AUGUSTINE IS A MAN WHO LOVES HIS WORK...
THAT WORK CONSISTS MOSTLY OF TORTURING, MUTILATING AND MURDERING ANYONE WHO STANDS IN HIS WAY.
RIGHT NOW, CAUGHT IN THE HEADLIGHTS OF THIS RUN-AWAY PSYCHOPATH IS A YOUNG BOY NAMED DEX MUNGO.
Eatokid
SHUT YOUR CAKE-HOLE!
SPEAK ONLY WHEN I TELL YOU!
NOW THEN, I'M REALLY GLAD YOU CALLED, BECAUSE I HAVE SOMETHING VERY EXCITING TO SHOW YOU--

LOOK! IT'S YOUR MOMMY!
JOSEPHINE MUMBO CANNOT BEAR TO LOOK AT DEX THROUGH THE MONITOR.
SHE HAS NOT SEEN HER SON SINCE SHE WAS KIDNAPPED BY THE AUGUSTINE BROTHERS, ICE AND TOM--
--MERCENARIES WHO ENFORCE THE WILL OF A SECRET SOCIETY OF POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS POWERBROKERS KNOWN AS THE EXPURGATORIUS.
ONCE A PROUD MYSTIC QUEEN, SHE REFUSES TO GIVE ICE AUGUSTINE THE SATISFACTION OF LETTING HER SON SEE THE HUMILIATION IN HER EYES.
OOH! THAT RICH AND CREAMY LATHER!
GETTING READY TO LEAVE THIS WORLD AS SHE CAME IN-- COMPLETELY HAIRLESS!
OH, THE SWEET IRONY! FIRST A VOW OF CHASTITY, NOW THE VOW OF SILENCE--
--THAT SURE LOOKS HEAVY, AND LONG! HOPE SHE DOESN'T FALL ASLEEP DURING THE GREATEST STORY EVER TOLD.

MEET DEX MUNGO, SOMETIME THIEF, FULL-TIME STREET RAT; HALF-HUMAN, AND HALF-GHOST. ENTER HIS REALM, THE ECTOSPHERE — A WONDROUS AND OFTEN DEADLY PLACE OF FANTASY, HORROR AND GRITTY ACTION, BETWEEN THE HERE AND THE HEREAFTER.
OH, NO! NOT THAT-- NOT, THE NEW OF PAIN!
YOU'RE SICK! DEMENTED!
STICKS AND STONES!
MAMA! OH, GOD-- IF YOU HURT HER--!
OH, NO--NOT A CLIFFHANGER! WILL SHE FRY? TUNE IN NEXT WEEK FOR--

--"YOU'VE ONLY GOT ONE MOTHER"

A WACHOWSKI · SKROCE · DVORAK · BARTA · GASPAR · THOMAS · MCLAURIN · POTTS · SMITH · DEFALCO PRODUCTION

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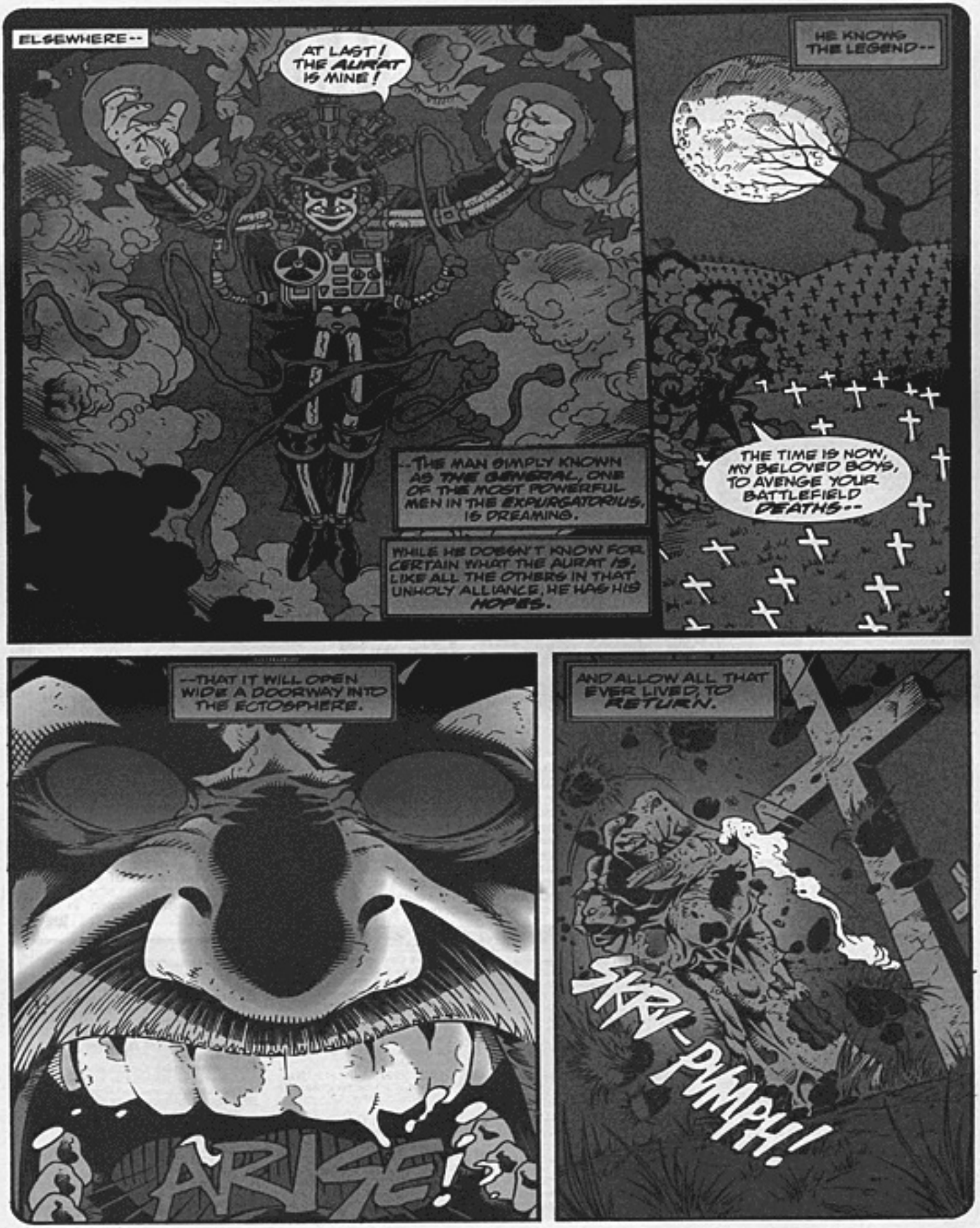
LISTEN TO ME, PSYCHO! I FOUND MY FATHER! AND I KNOW WHERE THE AURAT IS!
EXCELLENT. I BELIEVE YOUR MAMA'S FUTURE IS GETTING BRIGHTER AND BRIGHTER ... HEHEHE.
THIS IS HOW WE'RE GOING TO DO IT. YOU AND YOUR BROTHER--
ARE YOU CRAZY?!
YOU'RE GIVING ME ORDERS?
IF YOU WANT TO SEE THAT COW ALIVE AGAIN, YOU WILL WORSHIP THE GROUND I WALK ON!
KISS MY FOOT--KISS IT! STICK OUT YOUR TONGUE AND LICK IT! LICK IT, YOU HALF-BREED FREAK!

HEY, I SEE THAT! OHHH, THAT'S GOING TO COST YOU!
LOOK, YOU AND YOUR BROTHER WILL BRING MY MOTHER TO ST. LOUIS CEMETERY #4 AT MIDNIGHT TONIGHT.
YOU CAN'T TELL ME WHAT TO DO!
NO, BUT THE PEOPLE WHO JERK YOUR LEASH CAN! THEY WANT THE AURORI--THEIR KEY INTO AND OUT OF THE ECTOSPHERE! YOU'LL BE THERE. GOOD-BYE.
DON'T YOU DARE HANG UP--DON'T YOU DO IT-- NOOOOARRHH!
KA-BLAM
TOM, LOOK WHAT YOU DID. NOW CLEAN THIS UP AND GET ME A NEW PHONE.


ELSEWHERE--
AT LAST! THE AURAT IS MINE!
--THE MAN SIMPLY KNOWN AS THE GENERAL, ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL MEN IN THE EXPURGATORIUS, IS DREAMING.
WHILE HE DOESN'T KNOW FOR CERTAIN WHAT THE AURAT IS, LIKE ALL THE OTHERS IN THAT UNHOLY ALLIANCE, HE HAS HIS HOPES.
HE KNOWS THE LEGEND--
THE TIME IS NOW, MY BELOVED BOYS, TO AVENGE YOUR BATTLEFIELD DEATHS--
--THAT IT WILL OPEN WIDE A DOORWAY INTO THE ECTOSPHERE.
ARISE!
AND ALLOW ALL THAT EVER LIVED, TO RETURN.
SKRU-PUMPH!!

WITH AN ARMY OF THE GREATEST SOLDIERS WHO EVER LIVED BEHIND HIM, THE GENERAL TRACKS DOWN HIS MOST NEFARIOUS NEMESIS--
I HAVE YOU NOW, YOU HORNED DEVIL!
NYA-NYA-NYA AMERICAN PIG-DOG!
CURSES, FOILED AGAIN!
UNSTOPPABLE LEGION OF THE DEAD! STORM THE PALACE OF OUR ENEMY!
VICTORY IS OURS!
THREE CHEERS FOR OUR BELOVED GENERAL!
EASY LADS! OUR WAR HAS JUST BEGUN. LOOK!

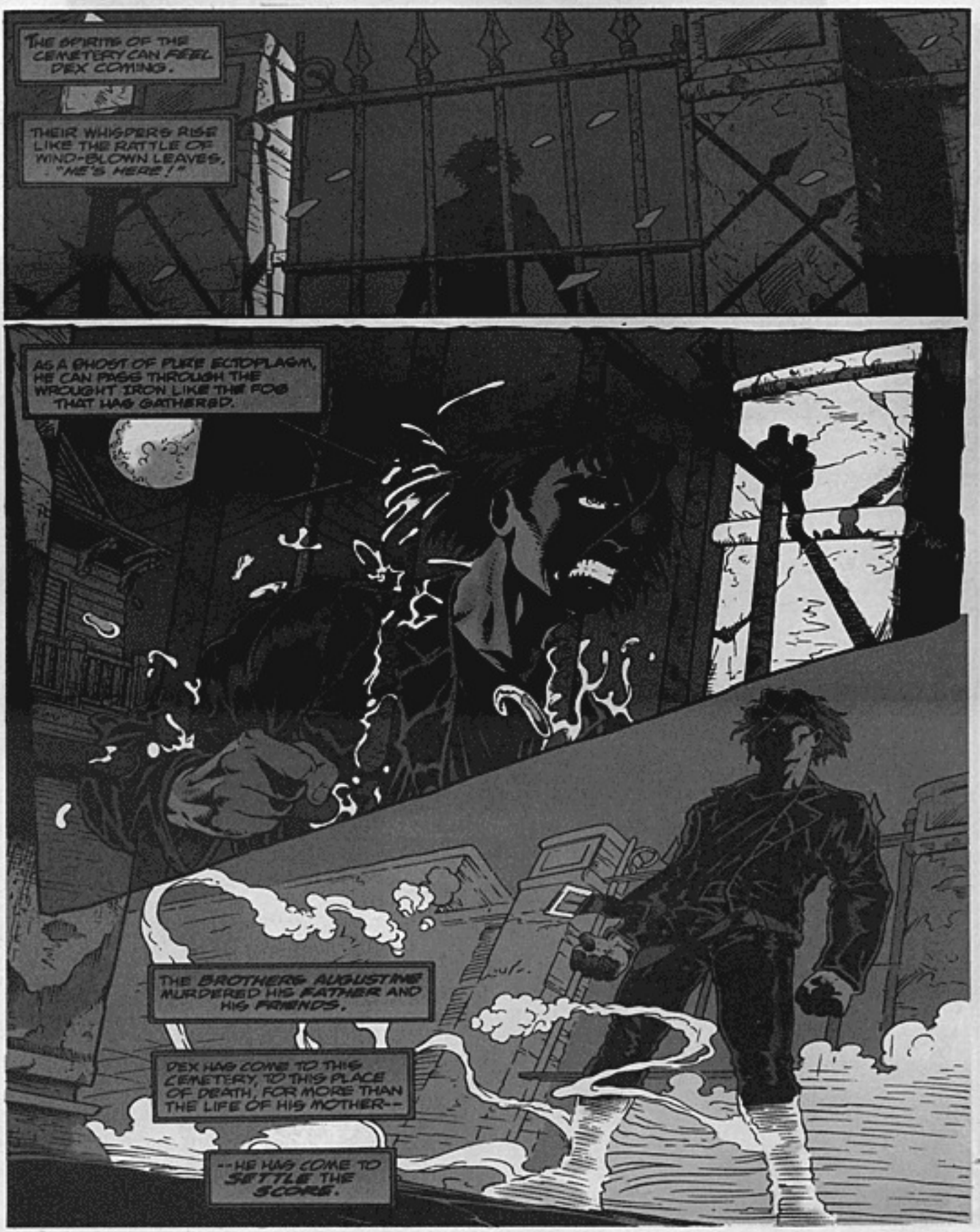
THE RED ARMY! ATTACK!
BOOCA
DOOFA
KA-BOOM!
ONWARD-- WE SHALL CONQUER THE WORLD...

I LOVE THE SMELL OF MELTING PLASTIC. SMELLS LIKE VICTORY!
PACIFIC OCEAN
INDIAN OCEAN
RISKY
"GENERAL?"
GENERAL?
GENERAL, I'M SORRY TO WAKE YOU SIR--
MMMM--I WAS HAVING THE MOST MAGNIFICENT DREAM--
SIR, THERE'S AN IMPORTANT PHONE CALL-- IT'S THE CARDINAL.
WELL, DON'T JUST STAND THERE, GET ME MY ROBE!

Ahh.
WHY HAVE YOU CALLED THIS MEETING, CARDINAL?
BE QUIET, SENATOR. WE MUST WAIT FOR THE GENERAL.
DEEP WITHIN AN ALABASTER CATHEDRAL IS THE HIDDEN ANTE-CHAMBER OF ONE KNOWN ONLY AS THE CARDINAL.
AS FAR AS HE HAS RISEN IN THE RANKS OF HIS CHURCH, HE HAS RISEN EVEN FURTHER IN THE RANKS OF THE EXPURGATORIUS--
--ALONGSIDE OTHERS, SUCH AS THE SENATOR, A POWERFUL INCUMBENT WITH PRESIDENTIAL ASPIRATIONS.
WHATEVER IT IS, IT HAD BETTER BE IMPORTANT.
CAN'T YOU AT LEAST GIVE US A HINT, CARDINAL? BY THE WAY, GREAT SPREAD, GREAT-- munch munch--
AND THE EXPURGATORIUS, PRINCE OF PROPAGANDA, THE TV TALK SHOW HOST THEY CALL THE MANIPULATOR.
JUST WHAT THE SAM-HILL IN TARNATION IS GOING ON HERE?!
GENTLEMEN, I HAVE WONDERFUL NEWS. BY MIDNIGHT TONIGHT THE AURAT WILL BE WITHIN OUR GRASP!

THEIR EYES GLAZE WITH THE INTOXICATION OF UNLIMITED POWER--
THREE MINUTES--
--IS ALL THAT STANDS BETWEEN THEM AND THEIR WICKED DREAM.
WHEN THE BIG HAND HITS 12--
--THE WORLD IS THEIRS TO REMAKE...
TWO MINUTES.
TWO MINUTES TO MIDNIGHT.

ST. LOUIS CEMETERY 4#4,
12:00:01
HE'S LATE!
I DON'T BELIEVE THIS! NOBODY MAKES ME WAIT! NOBODY!
I'D CONSIDERED LETTING YOU LIVE, LADY. BUT NOW, NO WAY.
THIS IS HUMILIATING-- YOU DIE, THEN HE DIES!
UH... ICE, REAL SORRY TO INTERRUPT... BUT...
TOM, ICE'S YOUNGER BROTHER CAN SEE GHOSTS.
ICE CANNOT.
THIS FACT HAS CHAFFED ICE SINCE CHILDHOOD.
ICE, I'M SCARED... SOMETHING'S HAPPENING HERE!


THE SPIRITS OF THE CEMETERY CAN FEEL DEX COMING.
THEIR WHISPERS RISE LIKE THE RATTLE OF WIND-BLOWN LEAVES. "HE'S HERE!"
AS A GHOST OF PURE ECTOPLASM, HE CAN PASS THROUGH THE WROUGHT IRON LIKE THE FOG THAT HAS GATHERED.
THE BROTHERS AUGUSTINE MURDERED HIS FATHER AND HIS FRIENDS.
DEX HAS COME TO THIS CEMETERY, TO THIS PLACE OF DEATH, FOR MORE THAN THE LIFE OF HIS MOTHER--
--HE HAS COME TO SETTLE THE SCORE.

ICE! LOOK! HE'S HERE! THE GHOST-BOY!
WHERE? WHERE? I DON'T SEE JACK!
SURE, HE'S RIGHT THERE. WALKING AT US.
YOU SNEAKY LITTLE FREAK! YOU CAME IN YOUR ECTOPLASMIC FORM! THAT'S IT! THE DEAL'S OFF!
BA-DOOM BA-DOOM BA-DOOM
TOM, TELL ICE TO CHILL.

ICE, HE SAYS YOU SHOULD CHILL. HEE HEE HEE. GET IT?
I'M GLAD YOU HAVE A SENSE OF HUMOR, FREAK!
'CAUSE YOU'RE GOING TO NEED IT PUSHING YOUR MAMA AROUND IN A WHEELCHAIR THE REST OF HER LIFE!
WAIT! THE AURAT! I'LL TELL YOU WHERE IT IS!
GHOST-BOY'S REALLY SCARED, ICE. HE'S GOING TO TELL US.
HE BETTER HURRY.
IT'S IN THE BACKSEAT OF MY FATHER'S CAR! IN A GUITAR CASE! WHEREVER YOU DUMPED THE CAR AFTER YOU KILLED HIM!
NOW LET HER GO!

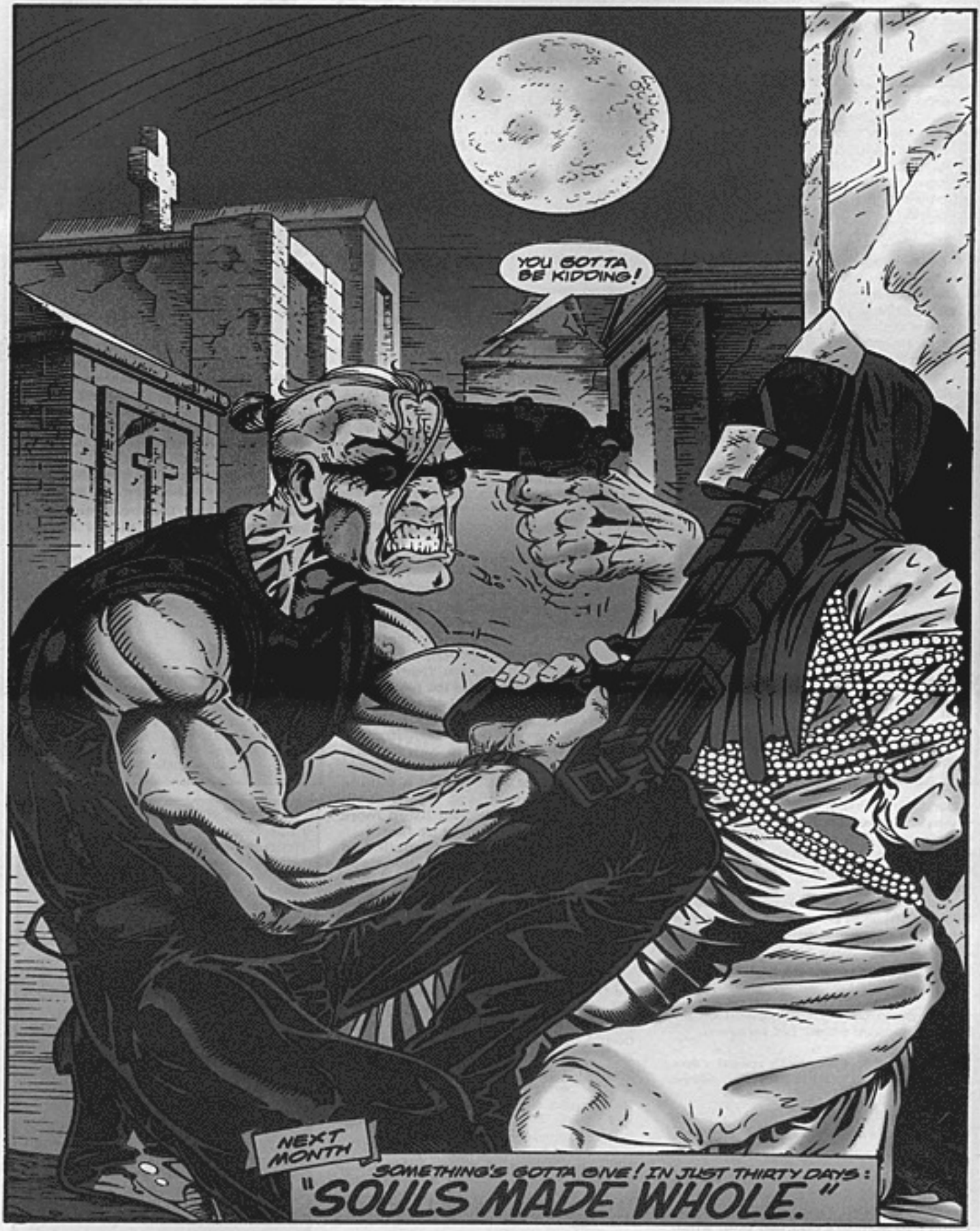
AS TOM REPEATS DEX'S WORDS, ICE SMILES.
HE HAS MOM.
LOOK AT ME, FREAK-- I WANT YOU TO REMEMBER THIS PICTURE!
REMEMBER HOW YOUR SWEET MAMA LOOKED BEFORE I SPLATTERED HER FACE INTO RED JELLY!
AND SINCE YOU'RE A STINKIN' GHOST, YOU CAN'T DO NOTHIN' ABOUT IT!
NOOOOOOOO!

DEX DRIVES THROUGH ICE'S FLESH...
--ECTOPLASM SMACKING AGAINST ECTOPLASM--
SHLOOOM!
--TWO SOULS BURSTING--
--LIKE THE SKEIN OF A GELATIN-FILLED BALLOON--
--DEEP INSIDE.
AAAAAAAAH
--SLOSHING, SPLATTERING, SWIRLING BACK TOGETHER--
--AS DEX SQUEEZES HIMSELF--
GUMPH
WHAT'D YOU DO TO US LITTLE--

GET OUT OF ME!
DEX FIGHTS DESPERATELY, CLAWING FOR SOME KIND OF CONTROL.
ALL RIGHT, FREAK-BOY! THIS HOW YOU WANT IT?
ICE... THE GHOSTS... THE GHOSTS! I THINK WE SHOULD GO--
SHUT UP, TOM!! COME ON, GHOST-BOY!
FOCUSING ALL HIS RAGE AND POWER, DEX POSSESSES ICE'S LEFT HAND.
WHAT?!
LEGGO! LEMME GO, FREAK!

HELP ME, TOM!
GAYAAA!
THE GRAVEYARD SPIRITS CHARGE TO PROTECT THEIR OWN, STRIKING AT THE ONE MOST SENSITIVE TO THEIR PRESENCE...
GAYAAA!
ICE, I THINK WE NEED TO GET OUTTA HERE!
ICE, LET'S GET OUTTA HERE!

GETTING TIRED, FREAK?
NO... NOT... YET...
THIS REMINDS ME OF A LITTLE SONG--
DEX WEAKENS AS ICE PINS HIS OWN HAND UNDER HIS THICK BOOT...
"wherever we go... whatever we do..."
"we're going to go through it..."
"TOGETHER!"
SAY GOODBYE TO MOMMY!
KLIK!
DEX SUMMONS EVERY LAST OUNCE OF STRENGTH TO FREE THE HAND.


YOU GOTTA BE KIDDING!
NEXT MONTH
SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE! IN JUST THIRTY DAYS:
"SOULS MADE WHOLE."

PLEASE SEND ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:
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EctoKid

Marc McLaurin

mixing of the minds

If you haven't checked out Tim Burton's THE NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS, I highly recommend it. I think it's one of the best examples of blurring distinctions between genres. It reminded me of this book.

And it got me thinking of the amazing task we've undertaken here. When you hit upon something new and expose it to the public for the first time, it can really excite people, and set off a whole hoard of imitators. Of course, it can also scare people, and leave you standing in their dust.

I remember from my days as a college party D.J. that there were always new songs I knew folks would love but which none of them would dance to. At least, not until they'd heard it at least twice. The same song that cleared the floor one month would bring everyone out the next, when the flavor had become familiar.

But months later, the D.J.s who dared to play the newest good music were the ones who got called back to run the next party.

what's the flavor

So, familiarity can breed acceptance, as easily and as often as it does contempt. And the bottom line is you never know when something really new and different will hook. But that kind of daring is what ECTOKID has been about from day one.

So how do we taste now?

Normally, we use this space to print the many letters we get from our readers. However, this month we decided to try something a little different: an interview with Steve Skroce, the penciler on the book.

Just so those of you who wrote in this month don't feel left out, we're sending a random five letter writers an eleven by seventeen photostatic reproduction of this months cover. Those that receive the goods, enjoy.

Are interviews something you might like to see more often? Let us know.

Now it's off to Canada to spend a few minutes with ECTOKID penciler, Steve Skroce.

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What first made you want to draw comics?

Skroce — Well, I got into super heroes when I first saw the old Adam West, Burt Ward, Batman. That got me going into school every day and, when I should have been studying math or english, drawing little pictures of Batman being frozen by Mr. Freeze. It went on to the Spider-Man Cartoon.

Then I found out, in I think first grade, that my school had this comic book club, and I went to that. This was a bunch of guys who were already really into comics. My first day in the club was kind of a bad experience. The way it worked was you would bring your comics and you would trade them, so you could read a whole bunch of comics without blowing your whole allowance. Well, my first day I couldn't get anyone to trade my Star Trek comic with me (laughs). That was depressing.

How did you get the job?

Skroce — From the moment I got out of high school, I was sending out samples. I knew this was what I wanted to do for sure. In the meantime, I worked a day job. I worked at this metal factory scrapping slag off metal boxes, day in and day out. I'd work all day and then at night, I'd just draw comic book pages and send them to everybody. And finally, I saved up enough money to take a week off and go to the San Diego comic book convention.

That's where I met Marcus (McLaurin). He liked my stuff, but I still had some work to do. So, I took some time to just concentrate on learning the basics. If there's anything I can suggest it's learn from those around you. I learned a lot just listening to people, other artist, at the San Diego comic book convention. There are a lot of people in our industry that are very willing to help newcomers, given the chance. Not all, mind you, but a lot will at least spend a minute with someone who isn't a jerk about asking for *too* much. Just listen more than talk, and you should be fine.

Anyway, the next time I mailed in with new samples, I got a phone call from Marcus.

As of now, you've done the pencils up through issue nine of ECTOKID. What's your current take on the character?

Skroce — I like him. Dex is a character that right off the bat, people might not give a chance, because he's not a gun-toting, testosterone-charged comic book character. But I think Dex is one of the most interesting comic characters out there. I see him as the kid in Terminator. More mature than he should be for his age — a born hero type — but with a street-tough kind of attitude.

Who are some of your major influences?

Skroce — Michael Golden is probably the biggest influence. Just the way he lays out a page is so dynamic and eye catching. It's so exciting. There's really nothing he does when he draws that's boring. It's cartoony, it's fun — that's really why; it's fun. But it's incredibly detailed, not just useless lines either, it's like real detail.

Is there a book by Golden that comes to mind as *the* book which shows what you're talking about?

Skroce — Yes, it's in an issue of MARVEL FANFARE, I think issue #47. I think it must have taken him forever to do. It's the story where the Hulk gets poisoned by some alien, starts trashing part of New York, and Spider-Man fights him. It's just amazing stuff. How about some other influences?

Mike Mignola, because he's excellent with light, both dark and moody. He's got such a simplified style. I don't think there's anyone in comics who has simplified their work so much, but it's still powerful; it's more of a plus than a minus. Todd McFarlane and Jim Lee for page layout and design. They're dynamic and know how to draw super heroes. Kevin Maguire, just because of his realistic faces and his understanding of expressions.

Thanks Steve

NEXT:

The power of possession is Dex's! But not without a price, as Dex and Ice sorta swap souls! (Say that five times fast!) Be here for all the sticky details in:

"Souls Made Whole!"

CUTTING EDGE ALERT!

Next week in HOKUM & HEX #7:

Trip Munroe is dead—Or is he? It's a split-second adventure as Trip's life flashes before his eyes, and Bloodshed threatens to make the journey his last!

ELSEWHERE, ALONG THE RAZOR'S EDGE:

In SAINT SINNER #7:

Trapped between the Earth and the Ectosphere with helpless humans to protect, Philip is truly on the eve of destruction! Is this the Saint Sinner's final hour?

In HYPERKIND #8:

The Wild Woman of the original Paxis returns—with a vengeance! Witness the resurrection of **Tempest**, with special guest penciler, **Roger Cruz** in the newest exciting chapter in the unfolding history of the Barkerverse!